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EXTRACT FROM AN ADDRESS, BY PROFESSOR STEVELLY.

THE following Extract from an Address delivered by Professor Stevelly, at the opening of the present Session of the Royal College, Belfast, will, we have no doubt, be most acceptable to our readers, especially to the parents of the students who had the privilege of hearing the Address.

WITH respect to your moral conduct, I trust I may feel confident that there is little necessity to dwell long on the obligation you are under to attend to it with the utmost strictness and circumspection. Could no motive more noble be placed before us to lead us to this determination, the consideration should be sufficient, that the moral character which you acquire at this period of your lives, will most certainly adhere to you in your maturer years. But after all, the most certain, effectual, and universally unfailing motive, is that of love and gratitude to him who has greatly loved us. Your principal study then should be, to endeavour to acquire a practical habit of referring even the most trivial words, thoughts, and actions of your lives to the will of the great searcher of hearts. Make that will your constant study, that you may judge with the quickness required in action, what particular line of conduct will be pleasing or displeasing to him; and lay it down as a certain truth, that there are very few actions, if indeed there be any, which *in practice* are entirely indifferent, however they may appear in the abstract when they are of necessity divested of all concomitant circumstances, some of which are only to be found in the secret recesses of the heart, and which can therefore only be known to ourselves and our great Master. This position I could easily prove if it were necessary; but each of you can convince yourselves of it if you wish to consider how any thought, word, or action, becomes entitled to the appellation of

sinful, as distinguished from being of directly evil consequence to ourselves or others. The principle when once firmly established in our minds, will often afford us a clear view of the sophistry of vain and thoughtless scoffers, who are continually on the watch to scare the weakminded from what their consciences clearly indicate as duty. Thus almost all the objections which are urged by the thoughtless against Temperance Societies are based upon generalities, and tend to show that certain moderate indulgences, divested of all those particular circumstances which, *in fact*, are always found, in one degree or the other, to accompany those indulgences, are not contrary to the will of our benevolent Father, who provided these enjoyments, as they are called, for us. Again, most of the wit that is expended upon those who have convinced themselves, and act zealously upon that conviction, that a more strict observance of the Sabbath is not only the duty of a Christian people, but would materially benefit the temporal condition of man, if adopted in practice;—most of this wit, I say, is based upon the general and ordinary harmlessness, and even utility and necessity of certain actions; while many particular circumstances, that essentially concern duty, are kept entirely out of view,—such as that there is an unqualified command of God, as to the observance of one day's rest in seven; that the Supreme is too wise to have imposed, in terms suited to all times, a line of duty upon one portion of his people, which other portions of his professing people might dispense with at their pleasure without fearing any evil consequences; because, in their shortsightedness, they cannot foresee any. These and many other limiting circumstances are entirely kept out of view. And almost exactly the same remark will be found to apply to cases in which wit or sarcasm is resorted to to scare us from what our consciences even feebly press upon us as our duty. We ought to remember that the danger of erring lies on quite the opposite side from what is usually supposed, and that, when the conscience has become even slightly informed of God's will through his revealed word, we are much more apt to slight its warnings, and thus in time to render it blunt and seared, than to run into any extravagance by yielding ourselves too easily or entirely to its guidance.

But when pressing this advice upon you, I am particularly anxious that you should not misunderstand me. I would press upon you this continued reference of every thought, word, and action, to the source of all good; and, although I would have this dependence upon a Rock that cannot fail you,

constantly to manifest itself by the excellence of the fruit it must produce, yet would I beg of you to avoid all unnecessary exhibition of it—all attempt at an affected appearance of superior sanctity—and, above all, avoid moroseness, and gloominess of thought, aspect, or conversation. A religious dependence upon our heavenly Father is not calculated to produce gloom and despondency. When founded upon faith in the promises of the glad tidings of salvation, its natural effect is to heighten our joys, to lighten our sorrows, and to cause us to indulge in decent and innocent mirth. He who surrounded us with such a profusion of innocent and rational amusements, and who not only has no where interdicted them, but even, on the contrary, joined in them, while with exceeding great love and humility, he sojourned in this mansion which, as it were, his very hands had prepared for our accommodation;—he never intended these *rational* and *innocent* enjoyments to be inconsistent with our love and veneration for him, and our continual remembrance of him, which, as it is our first and greatest duty, so it should be our greatest pleasure. Peculiar coincidences of circumstances will, indeed, often place before you the necessity of openly declaring and professing “whose you are, and whom you serve.” On these occasions, all reserve is instantly to be shaken off; it is then your duty, your privilege, your happiness, to let your light shine in such a way before men, that they, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father in heaven. Any symbolizing with the world on these occasions, through fear of incurring its displeasure, would be nothing short of open rebellion, or desertion of the standard under which we have been marshalled.

In order to acquire and maintain this habit of referring all your thoughts to the source of good, one duty must be attended to with the strictest regularity and cheerfulness. I mean private devotion and prayer. Of this we may notice two kinds: occasional, and stated. Numberless circumstances in the daily occurrences of life, calculated to call forth the exercise of occasional devotion, will hourly present themselves to you. Are you walking in the street, and do you see an object bowed down with want, wretchedness, or disease? Can you resist the impulse to lift up your heart in thankfulness to him who in his goodness did not find it necessary to his excellent designs, to cast your lot in such a way as to require of you to bear such a burden? Yet ask for strength to say sincerely, nay thankfully, “thy will be done,” should he see fit to reverse the method of his providence in regard to you. An instan-

taneous glance of thought is sufficient for all this. The step needs not slacken; the train of thought which connects us at the instant with the affairs of life, needs scarcely pause; and yet much spiritual strength and comfort will have been gained. Are you pleased and happy in the society of your friends, after having moderately enjoyed the bounty of him who careth for you, and who valued you at a great price? Let your heart expand with thankfulness. Make it your request that you may not be led away by pride to think that, for any merit of your own, you have been thus favoured before others with friends and plenty, and entreat that it may please him to make you the humble instrument of increasing the comfort of your less favoured fellow creatures. Do you see the companion of your youth, or him whom you lately noticed strong and healthy as yourself, or perhaps more so, bowed down with sickness, and at length borne to that grave which man, ever hasty in his conclusions, may call an untimely one; while your heart swells with sorrow, and the tear of pity for the bereaved parent or friend starts to your eye, lift your soul to him who has thus forcibly taught you, that this is not the resting-place of man, here he has no abiding city; else would he not flee away when hope was yet young, and life was big with promise. In this way almost every circumstance may afford an occasion of lifting our hearts with joy or confidence to him in whom we live, and move, and have our being. And thus, if God be in all our thoughts, our thoughts will all be love, and peace, and joy.

With respect to stated devotional exercises, the habitual morning and evening sacrifice of thanksgiving and prayer, is perhaps the most important to ourselves as individuals; and, because the eye of our fellow-mortals cannot be then upon us, it is the one we are in most danger of neglecting, at least in form. Yet it is a habit most invigorating, perhaps I ought to say essentially necessary, to the existence of a Christian frame of mind. It is surely a privilege, each night to be admitted to the more immediate presence of our Father and our King—to pour out our thanks for the blessings we have through his bounty enjoyed—to seek out by meditation, as in his presence, the motives which have directed our actions during the day—and to consider which were agreeable to the will and word of unspeakable purity, humbly to confess those in which we perceive we have come short, or acted contrary to his instructions, and to ask strength to continue and to go forward in those we feel he would approve of; and that his Holy Spirit may, according to his promise, be given to us abundantly, for strength-

ening us, purifying us, and giving us that comfort and peace which the world can neither give nor take away. In the morning, how delightful to go into his presence with thanksgiving that he has been pleased to permit us to rise in health from the bed that so many have lain on for the last time!—to pray that the light of his countenance may shine upon us during the day; that we may obtain strength to withstand those temptations which lie before us; and that, having stood, we may perceive the hand that has upholden us, and not proudly imagine that our own strength or goodness has sustained us.

As to the duty of attendance on public worship on the Sabbath-day, this will be pressed upon your observance in so many ways, and public opinion in these countries so far tends to control an open neglect of it, that I feel I am called on to say less to you in the way of advice upon this topic, than its importance would otherwise demand. I need scarcely remind you that public worship is one of the chief supports of that city which our Lord appointed to stand conspicuously upon a hill, that it should never be hidden. It is, as it were, the candle which, being elevated upon a candlestick, is intended to give light to all who come into the house. As to the duty of abstaining from every kind of ordinary occupation and labour upon the Sabbath-day, although the commandment of our wise and good Master would be motive sufficiently strong for our observance of it, yet modern advancement in knowledge has given us the information, that, over and above the numerous moral advantages resulting from it, there is a physical motive for its observance, which is by no means weak. A physician, of no ordinary power of intellect, and extent and depth of research, has lately, in his evidence before a committee of the House of Commons, declared it as the result of a wide induction of particular facts and observations, that the ordinary rest of the night is not sufficient for sustaining the health and vigour of the bodily frame of man, but that other periods of repose, at regularly recurring intervals, are required; and he stated it as his conviction, that, as might be expected, the intervals best suited to the constitution of man were about, and most probably exactly, seven days. This, together with the traditionary preservation of ancient customs, may at last afford a solution of the remarkable fact that so many nations, all differing from each other in descent, language, and manners, and separated by almost impassible natural barriers, have yet been found to have their time divided into periods of seven days,—a fact for which no astronomical or other natural origin could be assigned. And

thus not only has the Sabbath, by the most provident care, been made for man, but man, by a wise adaptation, been made suited in his bodily constitution to a provision which was so necessary for the most important interests of the great bulk of the species. These wise and nice adaptations of the bodily constitutions of man and other animals, to the situations provided for them, are now attracting much of the attention of philosophers, as the Bridgewater treatises amply show. The necessity of the Sabbath to compensate for the small deficiency of renovating power in the ordinary repose of the night, seems to me somewhat analogous to the longer and deeper respirations which, at regular intervals, we find it necessary to resort to, as a compensation for some inadequacy of the supply of vital air to our lungs, taken in by the ordinary process of regular breathing.

I would, in the next place, gentlemen, press earnestly upon you the utmost circumspection as to your ordinary conduct in private society; and, particularly, in your more unrestrained intercourse with one another. Unquestionably if the religious principle of a constant reference of all your conduct to God's will and word be strongly impressed upon your minds, it will produce fruit conformable to its excellence and universality in your lives; but you are to remember that the lives and conversation of men, and the company they associate with, exercise a powerful reflex influence upon their principles. Hence, therefore, as you would tremble at the thought of being insensibly led away from walking with your God, avoid carefully the least approach to irreverence or looseness of thought or conversation; and not only must you guard your tongue from all exclamations which may tend to produce a habit, in yourselves or others, of lightly esteeming the majesty of the Supreme Being, but all cursing, swearing, and violent asseveration, let them not be so much as named among you,—these not only tend to lower us in the opinion of all pious persons, and to deprive us of the advantage of their society, but they are, even by the worldly-minded, esteemed as sure marks of vulgarity and ill-breeding. If we speak the truth, these are unnecessary, as they are always useless in proving it to others; if we do not, how fearful is the state of him who, like Peter denying his Master, is drawing upon himself the searching, though pitying eye of his Master while he curses and swears to a lie! Let your conversation be yea and nay, for whatever is more than these cometh from the working of something evil. Connected with this evil custom, and nearly allied to it, is the exaggerating of truth, or the ut-

tering of what is not strictly true, in cases in which we endeavour to persuade ourselves that, as we are injuring no one, we are committing no sin. This, I say, is allied to the former, for both lead to the acquirement of habits which so accustom us to vices of their respective classes, that even the grosser and more scandalous violations of the law are often committed when under the influence of sudden passion or other excitement, from which we should have recoiled with horror but for these pernicious habits. Besides, the lesser vice almost necessarily leads to the greater; for lying is held in such just detestation in society, that a person who has made too near an approach to falsehood, will, in order to screen himself, swear if necessary, though at first perhaps reluctantly, to that of whose truth he can bring forward no better proof; or else he must asseverate so strongly, as to impose on his hearers, unless very bold, a necessity of acquiescing in what, in all probability, they consider a falsehood, rather than incur the risk of calling in question the word of a gentleman, pledged with such deliberation. Thus, then, a direct falsehood is sometimes to be resorted to, to bolster up a "white lie," as it is called; and thus the floodgates of iniquity are set open, and soon the sweeping torrent rushes in. Observe, here, that I am only speaking of those breaches of the commandments of God, which the general bonds of society do not require to be so much attended to, and which are not held in such general disrepute as they should be. From the more open and flagitious violations of the law, a regard for your character, and consideration of the station you are to hold in society, as well as the natural check of your consciences and the laws of society, will be in general sufficient to guard you; and if they are not, nothing I could say to you would have that effect. But I am anxious to put you on your guard against the more insidious approaches of the Enemy, because I know, from sad experience, that an idle habit, acquired in the forwardness of youth and fostered by the evil example of others, is most likely to pursue our steps into the more solemn engagements and duties of after life, and is then almost impossible to be eradicated, either by good resolution of our own, or by the advice or remonstrance of friends.

One other caution I cannot avoid pressing upon you with much earnestness,—avoid, as you would a pestilence, all impurity or obscenity of thought, word, or action; and equally avoid the company of those who indulge in gross language, or indeed in any other habitual vice. A stain received in youth will frequently remain, and haunt a man in every after stage of life;

while each attempt to shake off the incubus, in consequence of the manner in which our thoughts govern each other, will, in the natural course of suggestion, only tend more deeply to infix the stain. I know a person who, while a student in college, took up an immoral book which lay on the table of a fellow-student, and, during the few minutes that his friend was dressing for dinner, he read in that detestable book an indecent perversion of one of the most sublime passages in the entire prophecy of Isaiah; and confident I am that, were that person upon his death-bed, and should it please God to afford him time for that religious intercourse with pious friends, which most persons so earnestly desire at that awful period,—confident I am that, should that portion of prophecy be recalled to his memory, as it is most probable it would, an entire host of obscene and odious images and thoughts would instantly crowd into his disordered mind, in company with that which was intended to afford nothing but consolation and peace.

ON THE BEST MOTIVES IN EDUCATION.

BY MISS C. E. BEECHER,

From the American Annals of Education and Instruction.

Newport, Sept. 8th, 1832.

MR. WOODBRIDGE,—You write to request a statement of my experience on the subject of *emulation*. Your first inquiry is,—“Have you seen any bad effects from the principle of emulation, and what are they?” In reply to this, I would state, that when I first commenced the duties of an instructor, I was entirely persuaded of the propriety of employing this principle in stimulating to exertion, and convinced that I never could succeed without its aid. I felt that it involved evils, but that they were *necessary* evils, such as were always to be expected with whatever is *good*.

Lest my remarks should be misunderstood, for want of a distinct notion of what I mean by *employing the principle of emulation*, I would state, that I mean all methods of exciting others to exertion by rewards and punishment, based on *comparative excellence*. It is giving rewards to those who are decided to be better than their companions, in any of those particulars for which rewards are offered. The following are some of the evils I have experienced:

In reference to those who are most affected by it, this kind of stimulus often produces *too high a degree of excitement*. There are always, in every collection of youth, some who are naturally more desirous of admiration and esteem than others—a class of minds usually denominated *ambitious*. Such need to have this tendency repressed, instead of strengthened. They need to form a habit of acting from *higher* motives.

Yet these are the very ones who inevitably are most affected by the appeals to the principle of emulation. Such minds I have sometimes observed to be so much influenced, that all other motives seemed, for the time being, to lose their influence; and this, too, in circumstances where the ordinary class of minds would be but little affected.

Another difficulty has been experienced in the *limited extent* to which this method of exciting can reach. I have never been able to devise any method by which the indolent, unambitious, timid, and dull pupils (those who certainly most need stimulus) could be reached. Emulation always affects those the most, who least need excitement, and leaves unaffected those who most require it. A third evil is, that it renders those who come under the influence of this principle, *less susceptible of better influence*. I have ever found that children *form habits* in this particular. If a child is wont to have appeals made to his *affections* and to his *conscience*, he forms a habit of acting on these principles; if, on the contrary, appeals are made to ambitious motives, he forms a habit of acting under their influence.

A fourth evil has been, the envy, jealousy, suspicion, and temptation to deceit, which always have been experienced, to a greater or less degree. Unwearied efforts have been made to counteract and prevent such evils. But they always *have* existed, and in an exact proportion to the degree in which this kind of stimulus has been applied; and whatever others may be able to effect, years of experience have taught me to despair of disconnecting such evils with this kind of excitement.

At the same time, there will always be *a sense of injustice*, and a feeling of distrust and alienation, called forth towards the teachers who decide the relative merits of competitors. It is impossible so to adjust rules and accounts, that there will never be occasion to suspect partiality. Teachers and pupils will never form exactly the same opinions in all given cases, at the time the decisions of rewards are made. There will always be occasions of suspicion and complaint. I never yet so succeeded, on such occasions, as that these evils were not, to a greater or

less extent, the inevitable result; and yet the most unwearied pains have been taken to impress the pupils with correct views of their duty on such occasions, as well as to give them no just cause for such complaints. Those pupils who are too magnanimous to feel personally injured, are the ones who feel most sensitive to any apparent injustice to their friends.

The last evil I would mention is, that sacrifice of the *moral* interest to the *intellectual*, which is involved in the use of this principle.

The great object of education is to *form the disposition, habits, and conscience*, and the mere acquisition of knowledge is but a minor consideration. All the *benefits* I have ever discovered in employing this principle, have been in reference to intellectual improvement. The *evils* have had a much more important and extensive range, for which nothing can be an equivalent, when moral are placed before intellectual benefits. These are the evils I have actually found from experience. How much they have resulted from the defective nature of the principle itself, and how much from the want of judgment in employing it, it is not for me to decide. I can only say, that it has been a prominent object of interest, to purify it from evils and make it only good, and that after years of trial I have felt bound to banish it entirely, as a dangerous and needless principle in education.

Your second inquiry is,—“Have you found other motives equally efficient, and what are they?”

In reply to this, I would say, that I have been able to secure motives, not only *equally*, but *much more* efficient, in reference to all the objects to be gained in education.

Among these I would first mention,—

Personal influence.—If the esteem, the affection, and the confidence of the pupils can be gained, a great motive is placed at the command of a teacher. A desire to please—the fear of grieving a sincere friend—the apprehension of a loss of confidence and affection—the fear of remonstrance from one who is respected and esteemed—have very great weight in all such cases. It is only needful to convince the pupil that a teacher is really a sincere friend,—is worthy of respect and esteem, and is faithful in observing and recording deficiencies, to secure an influence which is always salutary, and never injurious. In this connexion, however, I would remark, that *commendation for improvement* needs to be practised much more frequently than reproof for deficiency. Hope and encouragement is a better tonic than fear and reproof.

A second method is by habitual appeals to *the Bible* as the rule of rectitude, and to *conscience* as the judge. It is certainly a fact that persevering in such a practice will strengthen the influence of conscience, and sometimes almost *make one* when it has seemed well nigh extinct. A child who is constantly treated as if it was expected he should act with reference to the true rule of duty, and in obedience to conscience, will gradually acquire a habit of thus acting.

A third method is by cultivating a love of knowledge for its own sake (that is, for the pleasure it imparts), and also for the sake of the increased good it will enable us to do to our fellow beings. Children can be made to feel the excellence of living to do good, and can be interested in acquiring knowledge, with this object in view.

A fourth method has been by efforts to form a correct public sentiment in school, so that it shall be unpopular to do wrong. If this can be done it brings a strong influence over every member of the community, and operates beneficially, and without any reacting evils. This is accomplished by impressing these responsibilities in this respect on the school in general, and on the most influential pupils in particular; and in *confiding* in them, and instructing them *how* to aid their teachers, in thus benefitting their companions.

Another method is by appeals to parental influence and that of other friends. This is accomplished by transmitting frequent accounts, both of deficiencies and of improvement, to the friends of the pupils. The certainty that those they love are watching all their course, and will certainly know both when they are negligent and when they improve, has a constant and only useful influence.

The last method I will mention, and the most certain and permanent, is by cultivating in the pupils a sense of obligation to God, of his constant inspection, and of his interest in all their concerns. This is a principle which gains strength the more it is appealed to, and is of course good and only good in its operation.

These are the principles upon which I have chiefly depended, during the last three or four years of my experience as a teacher. Every year has added to my conviction of their efficacy, and every year has increased my satisfaction that the principle of emulation which has caused me so much perplexity and trouble, has been banished with no consequent evil and much increase of good.

If my experience can be of any use in settling a question of

such paramount interest, it will be a matter of real satisfaction ; and whatever you find in this statement which in your judgment is calculated to this end, is at your service.

Respectfully yours,

C. E. BEECHER.

THE WISDOM AND GOODNESS OF GOD, *Manifested in the Architecture of Birds.*

(Continued.)

In the Baya, or bottle-nested sparrow of Hindostan, we see a delightful union of beauty and sagacity. The bird derives its familiar name from the shape of its nest, which is like a bottle, and is suspended by the small end to a flexible branch, for security against hosts of enemies, serpents, monkeys, squirrels, birds of prey, and I know not what all, which would fondly make a dainty meal on either its eggs or young.

These nests are actually castles in the air, and not airy castles either, for they contain several apartments appropriated to different purposes ; in one is the bed of state, where is the lady of the castle in solitary grandeur, and the lord of the castle himself serenades the partner of his joys in an adjoining apartment of truly aerial structure, for though covered overhead it is like the Irishman's sedan completely open below.

Dr. Fryer calls this sparrow the toddy bird, and most unjustly, for it would make small pretensions to wisdom or even common sense, if it did not detest toddy ; man, the "*bipes implume*," alone deserves the name of the toddy bird. Dr. Fryer, however, gives so good an account of this same bird, notwithstanding the bad name he calls it, that I shall quote it.

"Nature," says he, "in the rainy season at Bombay, affords us a pleasant spectacle, as well as matter of admiration ; for here is a bird that is not only exquisitely curious in the artificial composure of its nest with hay, but furnished with devices and stratagems to secure itself and young ones from its deadly enemy the squirrel ; as likewise from the injury of the weather, which, being unable to oppose, it eludes with this artifice : contriving the nest like a steeple hive, with winding meanders, before which hangs a pent-house for the rain to pass, tying it with so slender a thread to the bough of a tree, that the squirrel dare not venture his body, though his mouth

water at the eggs and prey within ; yet it is strong enough to bear the hanging habitation of the ingenious contriver free from all the assaults of its antagonists, and all the accidents of gusts and storms."

Most marvellous accounts have been given by different natural historians of the colonies of the sociable grosbeak, but even the most prosaic account of their encampments is sufficient to afford a fine illustration of my present theme. They commence by erecting in a tree a huge canopy or pent house, made of Boshman's grass, so firmly matted as to be impenetrable to rain. Under the eaves of this huge sloping roof, the birds then build their nests, frequently in such numbers, that several hundreds of them will be assembled together in one great republic.

Weaver birds furnish me with the next subject of illustration ; and who that has considered the process of weaving can deny that it must require wonderful powers of execution for a bird with no other instrument than its bill to imitate any such process ? *Imitate*, in fact, is not the word I should use ; for, long before man handled a shuttle, the weaver bird was at work, just as perfect at his trade as he is this day.

There are indeed few birds which build their nests with neatness that do not practice weaving, as may be proved by an examination of the inner coat of any nest of our common small birds which are lined with hair. And here I would hint in kindness to some of my naughty school-boy friends (and I was once myself a naughty school-boy), that instead of cruelly robbing bird's nests, it would be much wiser, and I can assure them more gratifying too, to wait till the bird has made her own use of her nest, and then examine carefully what a remarkably nice comfortable structure it is—put together with a firmness, order, beauty, and, more than all, usefulness, which with all their cleverness they could not equal.

I now come to the tailors, and should any one doubt my being able to find wisdom or strength among them, I hope to be able to undeceive him. I must premise however that the tailor-bird keeps no goose, and needs no thimble ; that his business is not making breeches but nests ; that he does not work as a journeyman ; for among the feathered heroes of the needle every man is his own tailor. I should almost suspect that some of these tailors are unacquainted with the adage,

The more haste the worse speed,

As said the tailor with the long thread,

for Wilson assures us that he measured one of the threads used by the orchard starling and found it thirteen inches long. Very likely however this criticism of mine originates in my ignorance of the tailoring business, for I find from Wilson's statement that this thirteen inch thread was thirty-four times hooked through and returned, winding round and round a nest knit or sewed through in every direction as if actually done with a needle, and firmly tied to a twig, to prevent it from being upset by the wind.

Behold a bird's nest!
 Mark it well, within, without,
 No tool had he that wrought; no knife to cut,
 No nail to fix, no bodkin to insert,
 No glue to join; his little beak was all;
 And yet how neatly finished! What nice hand,
 With every implement and means of art,
 Could compass such another?

The felt making species of birds, or hatters, are very interesting, but I pass by them, merely stopping to say, that the texture of their nests is like that of a hat or piece of double milled woollen cloth, the materials being carded into one another similarly to the process used in making cloth or hats.

Perhaps, however, I am prejudiced against the hatter birds, on account of their namesakes of the human species, being such drunken skemps; and therefore I will stop a moment to select from among them two very pleasing illustrations of my subject, one exhibiting the wisdom of the great Parent as evidenced in his creatures, the other his goodness in connecting the exercise of their wonderful talents with so much genuine enjoyment.

The nest of the Cape-tit resembles in figure a bottle; and has on the outside a pocket in which some assert the male takes up his abode while his mate nestles within, others say that this pocket or perch is for the bird to light on before creeping into the small door of its nest. If the male do not choose to remain on guard when his better self leaves the nest, he beats with his wings most soundly against the sides of the nest, and its edges being thus brought into contact adhere, and thus by a very singular contrivance the young birds are left perfectly secure from harm.

Vaillant, after describing the wonderful assiduity with which two little African birds laboured in building their nests, proceeds thus.—“This agreeable occupation was often interrupted

by innocent and playful gambols, though the female appeared to be so actively and anxiously employed about her building as to have less relish for trifling than the male, and she even punished him for his frolics by pecking him well with her beak. He, on the other hand, fought in his turn, pecked, pulled down the work which they had done, prevented the female from continuing her labours, and in a word seemed to tell her 'You refuse to be my playmate on account of this work, therefore you shall not do it.' It will scarcely be credited, that entirely from what I saw and knew concerning these little altercations, I was both surprised and angry at the female. In order, however, to save the fabric from spoliation, she left off working, and fled from bush to bush, for the express purpose of teasing him. Soon afterwards, having made matters up again, the female returned to her labour, and the male sung, during several minutes, in the most animated strains. After the song was concluded, he began again to occupy himself with the work, and with fresh ardour carried such materials as his companion required, till the spirit of frolic again became buoyant, and a scene similar to that which I have described recurred. I have witnessed eight interruptions of this kind in one morning. How happy birds are! They are certainly the privileged creatures of nature, thus to work and sport alternately as fancy prompts them."

I would particularly recommend the reading of the foregoing passage to newly married couples at the close of the honeymoon, or previously if necessary.

I shall now close by quoting two illustrations of the remarkable wisdom, courage, and perseverance, manifested by the fowls of heaven in self-defence.

"On the road," says the Rev. John Hall, "between Huntley and Portsay, I observed two magpies hopping round a gooseberry bush, in a small garden, near a poor looking house, in a peculiar manner, and flying out and into the bush. I stepped aside to see what they were doing, and found, from the poor man and his wife, that these magpies, several succeeding years, had built their nest and brought up their young in this bush; and, that foxes, cats, hawks, &c. might not interrupt them, they had barricaded not only their nest, but had encircled the bush with briars and thorns in a formidable manner, nay so completely that it would have cost even a fox, cunning as he is, some days' labour to get into the nest. The materials in the inside of the nest were soft, warm, and comfortable; but all on the outside was so rough, so strong, and firmly entwined with the bush, that without a hedge-knife, hatch-bill, or some

thing of the kind, even a man could not, without much pain and trouble, get at their young, for from the outside to the inside of the nest extended as long as my arm.

“They fed the young brood with frogs, mice, worms, or any thing living within their powers to subdue. It once happened, that one of the magpies having seized a rat which it was not able to kill, one of the young ones came out to help its mother, and it was likely to have been fully a match for both, when the arrival of the father, with a dead mouse, settled the unequal contest.”

My second illustration is equally interesting, but taken from a diminutive class of birds.

“During the residence,” says Bingley, “of Mr. Simpson at Welton, in North America, he one morning heard a noise from a couple of martins that were flying from tree to tree near his dwelling. They made several attempts to get into a box or cage which was fixed against the house, and which they had before occupied; but they always appeared to fly from it again with the utmost dread, at the same time repeating those loud cries which first drew his attention. Curiosity led him to watch their motions. After some time, a small wren came from the box, and perched on a tree near it; when her shrill note seemed to amaze her antagonists. Having remained a short time, she flew away. The martins took this opportunity of returning to the box; but their stay was short. Their diminutive adversary entered, and made them retire with the greatest precipitation. They continued manœuvring in this way during the whole day; but on the following morning, when the wren quitted the box, the martins immediately returned, took possession of their mansion, broke up their own nest, went to work afresh with extreme industry and ingenuity, and soon barricaded the door. The wren returned, but could not now re-enter; she made attempts to storm the nest, but did not succeed. The martins abstaining from food for nearly two days, persevered, during the whole of that time, in defending the entrance; and the wren finding she could not force the works, raised the siege, quitted her intentions, and left the martins in quiet possession of their dwelling.

Messrs. Editors,—I have a number of objects in view in furnishing your readers with such scraps as the foregoing. One of these is, to endeavour to create a taste for reading. We have not in Ulster—notwithstanding our boasts—we have not a reading population. I want, therefore, by mingling the sweet with the useful, to entice all, and especially the young,

to begin to read; and I have no fear if they but fairly begin, that they will find the employment so pleasant, and calculated so fully to reward their labour, that they will continue.

I want, secondly, to create a taste for the study of natural history, which is in itself a delightful and most useful study,—a study which can be pursued on every journey, in every walk, and during the happy hours of recreation.

My object again is, to cultivate the study of facts and actual phenomena; and not mere theories and dull disquisitions. Let the rising generation be taught, not merely to think for themselves, but to look with their own eyes and hear with their own ears, and draw general conclusions from the mass of facts which have come under their own observation.

I wish to have the study of natural history cultivated, because it is calculated to teach us humanity to the lower animals, and to humble us from the presumption and proud imaginary superiority which ignorance teaches and loves to cultivate: but most of all, I am very anxious that natural history should be cultivated, and that the Christian Freeman should be a means of its cultivation, because it is calculated, not only to give enlarged enlightened views of the works of God, but in proportion as this noble department of knowledge is cultivated, new light and glory are thrown over the sacred page; misconceptions are rectified; difficulties vanish; the wicked fooleries of infidelity are exposed, and the delightful analogy between the lesson taught by creation and by inspiration becomes clearer and clearer; the great Creator shines forth to our view in brighter and brighter manifestations of his glory; as the pious inquirer becomes more fully acquainted with his heavenly Father's works, he obtains, as it were, a more distinct view of his heavenly Father's countenance; as fold after fold of the curtain of ignorance drops, the great fountain of light, of happiness, and glory, stands more fully before our view, and though now we can at best see but in part and know but in part, yet it is bliss beyond expression, to have, even now, such a foretaste as heaven has granted, of what will be enjoyed in full perfection when we shall see as we are seen, and know even as we are known.

DIERVILLE.

THE ENDURING PORTION.

SAVAGE, the poet, received of the queen's bounty *fifty pounds* yearly, on certain conditions, not very honourable indeed to royal munificence, which, however, he fulfilled. But no sooner was the sum in his possession than he uniformly retired, no one knew where, and in the course of a few days or weeks, at farthest, appeared again among his companions poor and penniless as before. No doubt he enjoyed, on the lowest calculation, a scene of high but brief festivity, it being congenial to his nature to live in luxury *to-day*, though he should pay for it afterwards with dreary *months* of poverty and wretchedness. Nor did all the misery through which he passed cure his improvident habits. With eager and joyous anxiety he anticipated the reception of his annual income, which he yet knew could afford him no permanent relief, and which he was resolved to squander, whatever additional keenness to the pains of destitution might be the result. Unhappy man! whose joys were sorrows in disguise,—whose moments of riotous happiness seemed destined to increase his sensibility to the living stream of misery which flowed through his heart. His was not an *enduring* portion.

Our readers will feel disposed to denounce the conduct of Savage as culpable in the extreme, and we confess our inability to rescue the poet from the severity of their sentence. But we would say to each of them by way of caution,—“Beware, lest a large portion of similar thoughtlessness, imprudence, and guilt, lie at your own door.” The madness of Savage in the disposal of his royal portion we do not mean to excuse: in what terms, then, shall we censure the madness of multitudes who devote to unhallowed pleasure the span of life, regardless for the interests of an approaching eternity? Is their portion more durable, or spent with less downright insanity, than was the portion of the wretched poet? We have heard of a miser who had contrived to scrape together immense sums of gold, of which he retained possession all his days. His coffers were filled with money, and his heart was full of the love of money. Still this treasure of his soul, which he watched by night, and reckoned by day, did not constitute an enduring portion. The time of separation between the miser and his hoard arrived, and a sorrowful parting it was to him. In his last moments, he caused the gold which he had amassed to be brought near him that he might feel it, for his sight was now gone; and the

last words he uttered were a command to his relations to heap it around his dying hands. Soon, however, his feeble grasp was relaxed in death, and his spirit abandoned for ever the only portion it had learned to value. The portion in this case might be said to endure, but not to him who had chosen it. Its possessor, there is reason to apprehend, felt, to his eternal loss, that it was not an enduring portion. A man may be, therefore, rich throughout life—rich in the superabundance of the world's treasure—rich beyond the combined cravings of natural and factitious wants, and he may retain his riches in the midst of the awful scene of dissolution itself, while he has neither lot nor part in *the enduring portion*.

It may be alleged, that as the above are isolated cases, exceptions to the general conduct of mankind, the professing Christian who is smooth in his general deportment, and not inattentive to social and domestic duties, cannot be affected by any principles elicited from the conduct of a poet or a miser. In opposition to this view it were easy to show that it is not on any peculiarities of the examples adduced, but on what they exhibit in common with the doings of the great mass of society, that we have founded our observations,—which is sufficient to shiver the objection to pieces. But in order to remove all handle from the caviller, we shall endeavour to test by the infallible standard of the Word of God the claims of the bulk of professing Christians to the possession of the enduring portion, having first ascertained what this portion is, and how it is contemplated by those who have it in present enjoyment.

I. This portion is *eternal*; and hence it is styled emphatically *the enduring portion*. The right to it originates in none of the laws or arrangements which regulate worldly property. It remains unaffected by the *fall* of lives, and the revolution of years. No earthly covenant secures to us the enduring portion, and no earthly power can disallow our claim. The very circumstance of this portion having eternity stamped upon it, frees it for ever from all the bonds and entanglements in which men would seek to involve it; and testifies that no ruthless arm can strip the possessor of his right to this most valuable part of his property. Even the great dissolver of all earthly unions,—death, cannot break the link which connects us with the enduring portion. Death smiles at the mock *for ever*, which sometimes appears on our walls and tenements, knowing that he can obliterate the characters, and cut down each successive claimant; but the *for ever* which the hand of God has sculptured on the enduring portion, defies the efforts

of death. In this case there is no mockery; the portion is eternal in the most unlimited sense of the term;—and here is the very soul of the enjoyment which fills the bosom of the true Christian. He contemplates not merely an enduring *object*, but an enduring *portion*. An estate may be *mine* to-day, to-morrow it passes into other hands; it endures, therefore, but to me it is no longer an enduring *portion*. Now such a statement can never hold in regard to the possession of the believer in Christ. His portion, whatever it is, remains undisturbed amid all the changes of life, nor can death itself effect any material alteration upon rights derived immediately from the grace of the God of heaven, and therefore eternally unalienable.

II. This enduring portion is God. “The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I trust in him.” “The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup; thou maintainest my lot.” “This God is our God for ever and ever, he will be our guide until death.” These records of the happy experience of God’s servants, sufficiently establish our position; but it is necessary to inquire particularly into the relation which they affirm to exist between this portion and its possessor. When the Psalmist used the expression, “The Lord is my portion,” did he simply mean to convey to us a piece of information—a discovery of revelation or of philosophy—respecting the Creator of all, which afforded agreeable and invigorating exercise to his understanding? Was it a mere speculation, in which he embarked with the view of adding to his stock of intellectual wealth, or of securing a more refined taste and a higher elevation of sentiment? Oh! no: these objects, however important, were distinctly subordinate to the holier and more devotional feelings which thrilled in the bosom of David when he said, “The Lord is my portion.” His soul had found the object which alone is supremely satisfying—supremely worthy of love, respect, veneration. Towards that object there was a rushing forth of his desires, hopes, expectations, under the guidance of the exceeding great and precious promises; he loved, he adored, he blessed his heavenly Father, and expressed his undying interest in divine love, in the very utterance of the words “The Lord is my portion.” He regarded God with more intense interest than the merchant concentrates upon the vessel which is laden with all his property. His thoughts turned to God by day, and he meditated on him in the night watches; yea, he delighted himself in God, and experienced the word of truth to be sweeter to his taste than

honey, and the honeycomb. This is the conduct of the righteous man, while others are *attempting* to construct for themselves a portion out of the perishable enjoyments of Time:—

“*Attempt* how monstrous, and how surely vain!
 With things of earthly sort, *with aught but* GOD,
 With aught but moral excellence, truth and love,
 To satisfy and fill the immortal soul!
Attempt, vain inconceivably! attempt,
 To satisfy the ocean with a drop,
 To marry Immortality to Death,
 And with the unsubstantial shade of Time,
 To fill the embrace of all Eternity.”

III. The enduring portion retains for ever its incomparable value, and in this view it claims to be always regarded with unabated interest. A distinguished Briton had a grant of an estate made him in Italy, in consideration of the benefit which that country derived from his eminent services. Nothing occurred destructive of the rights thus honourably acquired, or calculated to alter the relation between him and this valuable property; but the estate itself was overrun by the sea, wasting its rich plains, and converting its verdant meads and fruitful valleys into sandbanks. Thus, though no vexatious litigation stripped him of his heritage, and no arbitrary decree revoked the grant, its value became greatly diminished, if not entirely destroyed, by a power over which man has no controul. This, therefore, was not an enduring portion, having lost that quality which forms the essential element of property. And it is so to a considerable extent with all earthly possessions. The *tenure* may hold good; the *right* may be placed beyond the reach of human law or human rapacity, and yet amid the unceasing fluctuation of all that is sublunary, our claims may be virtually nullified by the ruin of that which they embraced. Or on the supposition of an issue not so calamitous, is it not true that worldly portions frequently become less valuable, owing to different kinds of reverses, and therefore cannot continue to hold the same place in the estimation of their possessors? But the portion of the children of God knows no change: its value is infinite now, and infinite it will remain to all eternity. The God, who is their God for ever and ever, is without variableness or shadow of turning. He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. They also feel their interest in him to be unchanging as himself, so that none of the liabi-

lities of time can affect the portion which is dear to their souls. If, therefore, the ardour of their love to God is at any time damped, or if a corrupting worldliness steals over their spirituality of heart, we cannot trace this melancholy result to any depression in the value of heavenly wealth : for God is still the same ; the treasures of the kingdom of heaven are still the same ; the provision and promises of the everlasting covenant are still the same ; the enduring portion is still the same.

Now there will be little difficulty in applying the above remarks, as a test, to individual Christian character and experience. If God is the portion of our souls, our thoughts will often turn to him as our heavenly Father. The ordinary business of life will not stop all intercourse between us and our Maker and Redeemer : — many a precious interval, many a sweet moment will be devoted, in the midst of our occupations, to the silent prayer which yet God hears, and to the bosom aspiration which lifts up the heart in his service. The Bible will be our companion ; the Spirit of the Lord our teacher ; our conversation will be in heaven ; the promises we will take as the ground-work of our humble supplications, and the life that we live in the flesh we will live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us. Let the enduring portion then engage the thoughts of our mind and the affections of our heart ; and “let our love be firm, constant, and inseparable ; not coming and returning, like the tide, but descending like the never-failing river, ever running into the ocean of divine excellency, passing on in the channels of duty and a constant obedience, and never ceasing to be what it is, till it comes to be what it desires to be ; still being a river, till it be turned into sea and vastness, even the immensity of a blessed eternity.”

D.

SABBATH MAILS.

THE North American Review contains a temperate and well written article in reply to Colonel Johnson's report against stopping the transportation of the mails on the Lord's day. The review closes with the following delineation of the happy influence exerted on civil society by a practical and religious observance of the Sabbath.

Although we have admitted, for the sake of the argument, that the labour of the community, if suspended one day in se-

ven, is for that reason one-seventh part less productive, we are far from thinking that such is in fact the case. We believe, on the contrary, that this is one of the instances in which two and two do not make four. Whether we consider labour as intended to produce the immediate result, wealth, or the more remote one, well-being, physical and moral, we have no hesitation in saying that we believe it becomes more instead of less productive by an occasional suspension. We all know that our faculties cannot be kept for ever on the stretch. Without the nightly intervention of that "blessed thing, sleep," as Coleridge calls it, to suspend our toils and labours, soothe our cares, and recruit our strength, we should all, in a very short time, go mad and die. But the preservation of a sound, healthy, and cheerful condition of our nature requires, in addition to this, an occasional suspension of labour for longer periods; and it was, doubtless, in the kind view of accommodating his commands to the constitution which he had given us, that the Creator prescribed the observance of a weekly day of rest. The man who constantly pursues his worldly objects without allowing himself a moment's leisure, gradually acquires, by a sort of moral gravitation, an accelerated and feverish intensity of action, which, if not checked in one way or another, ends in extravagance, bankruptcy, and ruin. By wholly diverting his thoughts one day in seven from business, and turning them upon the high and glorious subject of his intellectual and moral relations to God, his fellow-men, and the universe, he cools the fever of his mind; and when he takes up his affairs again on Monday morning, he is surprised to find with how much clearer a judgment he considers the plans and purposes of which he took leave on Saturday. He now perceives errors that before escaped his attention, rejects imprudent projects that before presented themselves in tempting colours to his heated fancy; and if his gains at the end of the week be one-seventh less, they will probably at the end of the year be seventy-fold more. Instead of being a miserable bankrupt, he will be a thriving, healthy, happy man. We have no hesitation in saying that the fault we have here indicated of a too urgent pursuit of worldly gain, is a common trait in the character of our countrymen, and that a more exclusive devotion of the Sabbath to repose and religious contemplation, would be a most wholesome corrective of the evil. We strain every nerve to the utmost, employ every cent of capital that we own or can borrow, and, not content with obtaining an honourable subsistence for ourselves and our families by the regular practice of our res-

pective callings, grasp, with an agonizing effort, at any project that holds out the least prospect of extraordinary gain. What follows? A few persons amass immense fortunes, the possession of which has no very favourable effect upon their own characters or those of their children. The rest, at the first little convulsion in the world of business, are swept, like dead leaves before a November blast, into the gulf of bankruptcy. It would be vain to deny that the general habits of our active men of every class correspond in the main with this description; and it is, in our opinion, equally certain that a real and *bona fide* suspension of worldly cares one day in seven would greatly improve—were it only by its negative and sedative effects—the state of mind which leads to these extravagant efforts and their disastrous results. It is, in short, clear to us, that the labour of the community, by being suspended one day in seven, becomes, not less, but on the contrary a great deal more productive of mere wealth than it otherwise would be.

But this view of the subject, however important, is by no means the most so of those which may be taken of it. The object of all this toil and trouble, these convulsive strainings and desperate enterprises, is, after all, the acquisition of the means of subsistence,—“meat, clothes, and fire:” nothing more. But this, though a legitimate object of pursuit in life, is far from being the only one. It belongs entirely to our lower and animal nature. The intellectual and moral principle, the god within the mind, that loftier and nobler portion of our being by which we hold affinity with the sublime Spirit that created and informs the universe—this too has its claims, and they are of a far more urgent and momentous character than those of the other. But how can we do them justice if our thoughts are for ever absorbed, without the interruption of a day, an hour, a moment, in the routine of business? Our intellectual and moral nature is refined and exalted by study, solitary musing, or instructive conversation on elevated subjects—by the interchange of kind and charitable feelings—by the contemplation of the goodness of the Creator as shown forth in the majesty, harmony, and beauty of his works. If we mean to rise in the scale of being above the tools we work with, or the brute animals that we employ, we must allow ourselves time for these ennobling and delightful pursuits. The merchant must not nail himself for ever to his counter like a bad shilling; and the lawyer should remember that there is one supreme court in which his precedents will lose their authority, and his special pleas their importance—that there is one cause, and that his own, which

he must finally argue upon its merits. Let it be enough that the business of the world is pursued with unremitting activity and perseverance from Monday morning to Saturday night. When the Sabbath comes let the weary be at rest. Let the labourer of every kind cease from his toil, and go up to the house of God, not to ruminate upon the affairs of the preceding week, or to lay new plans for the coming one, but to yield up his whole soul to the current of lofty contemplations which the scene and the service are fitted to inspire, to feel the ravishing influence of sacred song, to indulge the devout aspirations that lift the humble spirit in holy trances to the footstool of the Almighty.

Nor let him think it too hard, if in the meantime his letters remain unread in the post-office. They will not grow stale before to-morrow. His communion with God is of much more consequence than his correspondence with his agent or consignee. Whatever the mere man of business may think of it, this is, after all, a matter of high importance. Unless the deepest thinkers had erred in their conclusions from the most mature experience and reflection; unless the strongest feelings within us are all delusion; unless the word of revelation be a lie, it is certain that our mysterious nature is only one of the transitory forms of a permanent existence; that our lot hereafter will be determined for ever by the use that we make of our faculties here. "As the tree falleth so it must lie." If we voluntarily degrade our minds in this world to the level of the brutes, it is impossible that we can start in the race of eternity with so much advantage as others, who have done their best to strengthen, exalt, and purify the intellectual and moral principle that survives the body. These are at once glorious and fearful truths. They are the truths which the greatest sages and lawgivers of every age, from Moses to Numa, and from Numa to Franklin, have kept in view in their political creations. No state of ancient or modern times ever obtained any real stability, of which the government did not rest, in one way or another, on the steadfast and immoveable rock of religion. Under our free and happy forms of political constitution, the only way in which this salutary principle can produce its beneficial effects, is by its influence on public opinion; and however much we may regret to differ from the very respectable committee, whose report we have been examining, and the writers who concur with them, we have no hesitation in expressing our conviction, that the people of the United States have nothing better, in regard to their political concerns, to

hope, or wish, than that all their agents should be *influenced in the exercise of temporal power by religious belief*. This would not bring about, without apparently attaching any very distinct meaning to the terms, *a union of church and state*; but it would procure us, under the blessing of Providence, a wise, liberal, efficient, and, above all, honest administration of the government in all its branches, a condition of general and constantly progressive prosperity, and, to sum up all in one word, peace.

THE SUTTEE.

BY THE REV. HENRY TOWNLEY,

(Formerly Missionary in Calcutta.)

AMONG the numerous and striking illustrations which India furnishes of the melancholy fact that idolatry is not only a system of ignorance and superstition, but of inhuman cruelty and murder, the immolation of the living, and often young, lovely, and affectionate widow, with the loathsome and emaciated corpse of her deceased husband, is one of the most barbarous and affecting; and, until very recently, the tragic and revolting scenes connected with the rite, were not unfrequent even in the vicinity of Calcutta, and almost under the eye of the supreme government. The melancholy records of this are too numerous and authentic, to admit the hope, which humanity would fondly cherish, that these deeds of cruelty and death had been less frequent than was generally supposed.

I was informed one morning, while residing in Chinsurah, that, in the afternoon of the day, a suttee was to take place at no great distance from the house in which I dwelt. When the hour arrived I went towards the spot. In an open space near the banks of the Ganges, and not far from the habitations of the people, I beheld a crowd of between two and three hundred persons, including Brahmins and others already assembled. My feelings were not a little excited by the spectacle as I approached, nor were they moderated by the first salutation which I received from the lips of a merciless priest, who exclaimed, "What, Sir, are you come to witness the sport?" With a heavy heart I answered, "You may thus denominate the dreadful deed about to be committed, but the time is coming when an unerring Judge will pronounce it to have been not sport but murder." The widow, who appeared to be about forty years of age, had arrived, and I now addressed myself to the wretched victim, but in vain: stupified by grief, or fear, or opiates, or

all combined, she answered as one half dead already, and was quite unmoved by any thing I could urge. I turned to the unhappy daughter, who had arrived at an age that enabled her fully to comprehend the import of my remonstrance, as she appeared about sixteen, and upon whom it devolved (as I was informed) to apply the fatal torch,—“Is it possible,” I said to her, “that you are about deliberately to take away your own mother’s life—the life of her to whom, under God, you owe your own? God in his providence has taken away your father—his lifeless remains are on the ground before your eyes; you are already fatherless, and will you by your own wilful act, deprive yourself of your surviving parent, and render yourself motherless, also, and thus an entire orphan?” “Alas!” she answered, “what can I do? If I refuse obedience to the requisitions of the Brahmins I shall be utterly disgraced, and ruined, and be unable to lift up my face in the neighbourhood where I live. I have no alternative—painful as it is, I must proceed!” Attempts to dissuade her from her purpose failing, I expostulated with the Brahmins. Unable to defend themselves against the charge of violating the first principles as well of reason and humanity as of true religion, they and the crowd around them stood silent and seemingly abashed. I seized the opportunity of addressing God in prayer. They were yet more disconcerted, and evidently anxious that my brethren, by whom I had been joined, and myself should retire. This we were unwilling to do, so long as there was any prospect of preventing the sacrifice, and my companions now also used their efforts to preserve the unhappy widow’s life, but without success. We at length took our stand at a short distance from the pile of wood, protesting by our countenance and look against their iniquitous and murderous procedure. After a pause of about half an hour, finding that we were resolved to stay, the bloody ritual went on. The widow was bathed in the river Ganges, whose waters were considered sacred and efficacious to purify the victim for the sacrifice. Red powder and flowers were scattered upon her person, and round about; incantations were offered by the Brahmins to their imaginary gods; and now the deluded votary was led, with a faltering pace, thrice round the fatal pile. She was then seized, tied with cords to the emaciated corpse of her husband, and both were placed on the wood. Inflammable materials were thrown upon them, long bamboo poles were held across the bodies to keep them down, and to prevent the possibility of the unhappy widow’s escape when the cords were burnt. The sun had set; the short season of

twilight had given place to a darkness that appeared better suited to the fiendish work going on before our eyes. All things being now in a state of dreadful preparation, the torch was applied. The combustible materials that had been supplied in abundance caused it to burn with terrific rapidity and fierceness. When I saw the flames raging and the smoke ascending in dense and whirling volumes to the skies—when I heard the beating of the drums, mingled with the yells of the priests and spectators, to prevent the screams of the scorched and frantic victim, now, by the torture of the flames, fully awakened to the discovery of her real situation, from being heard—when I reflected that it was one of my own species whose life was being thus, amidst excruciating agonies, extinguished, my heart sickened; I said within myself, surely the exclamation of Jacob, when he saw the vision of the ladder, and the ascending and descending angels, must be reversed to be applicable to the scene I now behold, for truly this is none other than the house of Satan—this is the very gate of hell. Oppressed at the sad spectacle, my only comfort was derived from the Gospel, and from meditation on its glad tidings; and the anticipations of the time when these and all other unhallowed flames should be extinguished by the floods of mercy which it is destined to pour forth upon India, as well as every other land. That beautiful hymn of Watts especially came to the relief of my agitated nerves and feelings—

“Salvation! O the joyful sound!
 ’Tis pleasure to our ears,—
 A sovereign balm for every wound,
 A cordial for our fears.

“Salvation! let the echo fly
 The spacious earth around;
 While all the armies of the sky
 Conspire to raise the sound.”

THE HOUSE FOR HIDDEN PRAYER.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM ELLIS.

NEAR the margin of one of those beautiful bays which indent the picturesque shores of the South Sea Islands, stood the lowly hut of the native chieftain. Tall in stature, noble

and prepossessing in appearance, respectable in rank, and allied by marriage to the reigning family, Poheutea exerted no ordinary influence over his own tenantry, and the inhabitants of the island in which he was a chief. The spot he had selected for his abode was one of great natural beauty, and unusual convenience. A winding stream, originating in a fountain on the side of a neighbouring hill, rippled along its pebbly bed near the end of his dwelling, and, a few yards in front of the rising ground on which it stood, a fine level beach of sand and shells, and fragments of coral, bordered the smooth surface of the sea. Rock-fish of every diversified colour and form were seen sporting among the corallines that adorned, as with gay parterres, the sandy or rocky bottom of the bay; while the feathered tribes sung among the trees on the shore.

Poheutea was, however, an idolator, and a savage warrior, and had often led his own tribe, or, associated with other chiefs, had conducted the inhabitants of his native island to the field of battle. Often too had he joined in the pagan procession, or the rites of sacrifice in the idol temple. The spot he had selected for his dwelling, though rich in the varied charms of nature, was wild and uncultivated; idolatry presented its proprietors no inducement to industry, and when not engaged in war, athletic sports, or fishing, Poheutea passed his days in that luxurious indolence which is so congenial to the untutored savage, and prevails so extensively among semi-civilized communities of men.

Fifteen years ago idolatry was abolished, and the sublime and humanizing religion taught in the Bible introduced to this and the neighbouring islands. Poheutea and Teraimano his wife were among those who experienced its sacred influence, and were raised thereby, not only to a participation of hopes full of immortality, but also to habits of industry, and the enjoyments of organized society and civilized life. A neat and spacious house, with white-washed walls, glazed windows, and boarded floors, was erected for their abode, instead of the lowly leaf-thatched hut in which they had been accustomed to sleep on the earthen floor. Two stately trees spread their umbrageous branches in front of the dwelling, while the lofty cocoa-nut, crowned with a graceful plume of verdant leaves, waved over it with every passing breeze. The wilderness around was cleared, and an extensive garden enclosed, in which oranges and lemons, plantains and bannas, sugar-canes, papaws and pine-apples, yams and other edibles, were seen growing with all the luxuriance of inter-tropical vegetation.

A friend one day visiting Poheutea, took a walk in his garden, and after straying along the paths (some of which were covered with sand and shells from the sea-beach) arrived unexpectedly at what appeared to be a little native arbour or summer-house, built with the erect branches of the hibiscus, and placed in the embowering shade of the adjacent trees. On entering it he found the floor covered with a native mat; near a window stood a small rustic table, beside it an equally rustic seat, and on a shelf, in one corner, lay a copy of the Scriptures, and a hymn-book, in the native language. There was something in the peaceful seclusion of this retreat that seemed to invite to meditation, and every thing around appeared adapted to elevate the mind with enlarged conceptions of the wisdom and the goodness of the Creator. After enjoying for a few minutes the cool shelter it afforded, the visiter was retracing his steps, when he met his friend, and inquired to what use it was appropriated. "That," said Poheutea, turning to the little summer-house, "is a *fare bure huna* (house for hidden prayer); and many are the hours I have passed in the retirement it affords." His friends afterwards learned that every morning and evening Poheutea was accustomed to spend some time in this place, in reading, meditation, and prayer.

The conduct of Poheutea in this respect was not singular; private prayer was almost universal among the people, and attached to many of the cottages in the settlement might be seen a small house for hidden prayer, situated in the gardens or shrubberies by which they are surrounded.

PROVIDENCE ILLUSTRATED IN EVAPORATION.

"He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth."—
PSALM cxxxv. 7.

THE discoveries of modern science throw light on many passages of Scripture. Some have a prejudice against adducing illustrations from the discoveries of science, or from the works of nature, into the pulpit or into religious periodicals. But when such illustrations are properly managed, prejudice against their application is not only absurd, but contrary to the very Bible which such a prejudice pretends to hold in exclusive reverence; for it is written, "The works of the Lord are great,

sought out of all them that have pleasure therein."—Psalm iii. 2.

That passage, for example, which heads this notice, "He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth," is beautifully illustrated by what science tells us relating to evaporation. By *evaporation*, water and other liquids are converted into vapour. *Heat* acting on the water turns it into vapour; and this vapour being lighter than the water, or the air, it ascends, and mixes with the atmosphere, where it remains invisible, or assumes the appearance of clouds. It is calculated that, during twelve hours of a summer's day, more than one thousand six hundred gallons of water are drawn up into the air in vapour from one acre of ground. It is calculated that from the ocean there are drawn upwards every twelve hours by means of evaporation, more than thirty millions of millions of cubic feet of water, a supply sufficient to replenish all the rivers of our globe. This immense body of vapour, formed into clouds, is carried by the winds over the whole surface of our world; and being condensed, falls down in the shape of snow, rains, and dews, to water and refresh the earth. Thus the water ascends from the earth and returns to it again. Such is the law which the Almighty has ordained; and behold its wonderful uses. Many things necessary to our comfort and accommodation, nay, our existence in the world, depend on the process of evaporation. By evaporation our clothes are dried; for though we should wash them, if there were no evaporation, they would never dry. Were evaporation to cease, there would be no rains or dews to refresh our fields, and the consequence would be that the earth would become dry as a burnt brick, and all vegetation would perish from the earth. Were evaporation to cease, all the rivers would soon run themselves out into the ocean, and leave their channels dry; for it is by evaporation that an unfailing supply of water is carried from the ocean to the air, and from the air falls down to replenish the springs, and streams, and rivers of the world. Were evaporation to cease not only would vegetation and water fail from the earth, but man and all animated nature would perish also.

The knowledge of the law of evaporation illustrates, also, that language of Solomon, who, by the way, was distinguished for his skill in science as well as in divine wisdom. Indeed, the word and works of God, as they have the same author, mutually illustrate each other, and should be always studied together. The language referred to is found in Eccles. i. 7,

“All the rivers run into the sea ; yet the sea is not full : unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.” “All the rivers run into the sea :” this is a fact ; but why is it that the sea, notwithstanding, is not full ? Why is it that such vast bodies of water, as the rivers in all parts of the globe are unceasingly pouring into the ocean, do not fill it up, so as to overflow its banks, and deluge the earth ? How is this ? Because, as Solomon tells us, “To the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.” Rivers and springs come from the hills and mountains ; but how do they return thither from the ocean ? It cannot be that they rise thither upwards through the earth ; for it is a certain law of nature that no fluid can rise in a tube above the level of its source. How, then, do the rivers return to their source ? By evaporation. From the surface of seas, rivers, and lakes, there is carried up into the atmosphere, in the form of vapour, three times the quantity of water sufficient to replenish the sources of all the rivers. The vapour thus raised by evaporation into the atmosphere is carried by the winds over the globe, and then falls down in rains and dews on the lowlands, to carry on the process of vegetation, and on the hills and mountains to replenish those springs which send their waters downwards to the ocean, thence again to be raised by the process of evaporation.

In the philosophy of the Bible one thing is remarkable, that all natural causes and effects are ascribed ultimately to the agency of God. He causes His sun to rise. He makes His rain to descend on the just and on the unjust ; and in the 135th Psalm, we are called on to adore and praise Him because of *this*, among numberless other works of His, “He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth.”

The philosophy of evaporation illustrates another text of Scripture which we find in Amos v. 8,—“Seek Him—that *calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth ; the Lord is his name.*” Now, how does God call the waters of the sea, and pour them out upon the face of the earth ? He does this by second causes : but though it is done by the intervention of second causes, the efficacious agency is as really his, as if done without the intervention of any secondary agency whatever. “He calleth for the waters of the sea.” How so ? The water is raised by heat in the form of vapour from the ocean ; this vapour, mingling with the atmosphere, is carried by the winds abroad above the surface of the globe, and, being condensed in the higher

regions of the air, is “poured out,” in rains and dews, “upon the face of the earth.”

THE DEFICIENCY NOT IN GOD, BUT IN MAN.

THE whole world is agreed in one thing—that Christians, as instruments of good in the hands of God, are bound to use *effort*; and that God promotes his own benevolent ends, through the agency of *means*. Before we pray again, then, for a revival, let us ask ourselves, if we are determined to use the proper means, when they are pointed out to us—if we are willing to *act* as agents in promoting the conversion of men to his praise. If we are not, then we have grounds to suspect our Christian character. We have reason to inquire for the reason of our hope of salvation, and see whether it be not the hypocrite’s hope, that “shall perish when God taketh away the soul.” If we are eagerly seeking the path of duty, and waiting for the showings of the Spirit, we can, doubtless, see something in our previous habits preventing the Saviour’s return. In our efforts, then, to promote a revival of religion throughout the land, let us fix our minds, *definitely*, on these points.

1. Is the Spirit stayed because of any deficiency on *my* part? Am I, in any way, the cause of the present religious depression? By positive or apparent sin, or by neglect of any duty, do I contribute to hinder a revival?

2. Am I *willing* to have the work of God revived; and, for the sake of promoting that end, am I willing to forsake the cherished sin—to do the neglected duty—to come up to the full course of Christian effort, as my conscience and the Holy Ghost demand?

3. Permit us to add,—if these questions are answered affirmatively, will you do it *now*?

We would distinctly recognize the agency of the Spirit in all those operations, where his special presence is manifested. But, at the same time, we would have it felt with equal distinctness that divine influence does not, and never will preclude human responsibility. The deficiency to be remedied is not in God, but in man. Let us hear and weigh his own challenge,—“Bring all the tithes into the store-house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” “Hath he said, and

will he not do it? Hath he spoken, and will he not make it good?"—*Am. Bap. Mag.*

HOW TO FIND OPPORTUNITIES FOR DOING GOOD.

MANY persons, and among them some who appear truly pious, lose almost every present opportunity to do good by waiting for a better. They feel some promptings of conscience and benevolent desire to improve any opportunity that presents itself; still they see difficulties in the way, and fancy that they descry rising in the distant horizon a brighter prospect of usefulness. But as the prospect approaches, it gathers darker shades; and is suffered to pass on and leave room for another, that turns up, mantled by brighter promise and more unfailing certainty. Thus the delusion goes on, till every present opportunity for doing good is bartered for delusive prospects. Now the great secret of doing good is told in a few words: Seize every opportunity as it comes to hand, make the most of it, and never exchange it for the uncertainty of a future prospect.

A REQUISITE TO COMFORT.

WE live in a world which has so many sharp points and critical stations, that our own comfort, as well as of those with whom we live, is made to turn upon mutual kindness, forbearance, accommodation, and dependence: in want of these, we are condemned to bear the lash of continual discord, and are made our own tormentors. The least consideration will inform us how easy it is to put an ill-natured construction upon a word; and what perverse turns and expressions spring from an evil temper. Nothing can be explained to him who will not understand, nor will any thing appear right to the unreasonable. "Every thing in life," says one of the ancients, "has two handles;" but it must be a bad disposition indeed, which will be ever seizing the wrong one.

I therefore repeat it, that if you would *have* comfort, you must *give* it. It is no uncommon thing to hear the very persons who throw a family into confusion, complain that there is no peace in the family; but he that would escape the calamity

of fire, must be careful not to strike the sparks which enkindle it.

The only remedy for all these evils is true religion. This, so far as it is embraced, brings "glory to God, peace on earth, and good-will toward men."—Luke ii. 14. The slightest acquaintance with the doctrine and example of our Saviour, must convince every unprejudiced mind of their holy and heavenly tendency; and the *tendency* of this religion is a sufficient proof that it came from heaven, and leads to it again, if no other proof could be given.

"From whence come wars and fighting among us," but from the want of that mind which our master possessed and recommended? Such a mind would put an end to those bickerings and jealousies, which render families so wretched. Christianity teaches us to suffer ills, not to inflict them; and to give "good measure and running over," rather than nicely to consider what was *agreed* for.—*Cecil*.

RECEPTION OF EMANCIPATION AMONG THE WEST INDIA SLAVES.

"Break every yoke, and let the oppressed go free.—Is. lviii. 6.

ON the first of August last, the West India slaves were declared free. Bloodshed and riot had been predicted by the enemies of negro freedom. But how did it pass off? It was a day of peace, and of praise to God.

Antigua, August 2.

"The day of wonders, of anticipated confusion, riot, and bloodshed, has passed by; and all is peace, and quietness, and order:—no ebullition of any kind, no martial law, no ostentatious display of power! The churches and chapels of all denominations were thronged to excess. On Monday, it is expected that the people will turn out to work; and although there may be some difficulties to be overcome, and inconveniencies for want of cash to pay wages, &c. yet I am satisfied that, after a little while, it will be found a much more economic, efficient, and profitable system, than that which has now gone—and gone for ever! Hitherto the influence of the Bible and religion has been predominant; and I trust it will continue so."

From the Rev H. B. Britten. Nevis, August 4, 1834:

"On Friday last, the first instant (a day observed by proclamation, as a day of thanksgiving to Almighty God for the termination of slavery), I announced from our pulpits, to many hundreds of emanci-

pated negroes, your pious intention. The proprietors universally gave the negroes here both Friday and Saturday; and I am happy to write, they conducted themselves in a Christianlike manner. Yesterday I was round the island; and never heard of a single improper act, not even of a man being intoxicated. Without the interference of any law, they yesterday totally abandoned the Sunday market; and there was no more sign of this strong hold of the devil, either in town or country, than if it had never existed. Hallelujah!—Our chapels were crowded to suffocation. We must now find room in the places of worship for the hundreds, for the many hundreds, who used to be every Sunday in the market-place. But how must this be done? We greatly need help.”

DISPUTE AVOIDED.

THE late Rev. Dr. Waugh was once conversing with a brother minister on the evils arising from religious slander, and the passage was referred to of Michael the archangel disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, and who brought not a railing accusation. The doctor asked, “and dont you know why he did not rail?” “No,” was the reply. “Why,” rejoined the doctor, “he had two good reasons for declining it:—in the first place, he had not been so much used to it as the devil; and in the second, he knew that if they began, the devil would be sure to have the last word.”

THE TRUTH AS IT IS IN JESUS.

THE truth as it is in Jesus, we understand to be a summary expression of all that Jesus taught personally and by his apostles. And this relates to himself and to God and to men. Some of the element of this truth are, 1,—The perpetuity, extent, spirituality, goodness, and severity of the Divine law. 2,—The accountability, entire sinfulness, and condemnation of men, and their exposure to the wrath of God. 3,—The Messiahship, mediation, divinity, and atonement of Christ. 4,—Regeneration by the Spirit of God; repentance and faith, love to God and love to man, and a life of conformity to the divine will. 5,—The resurrection of the dead, the “eternal judgment,” the everlasting happiness of the righteous, and the everlasting punishment of the wicked.—*Zion's Advocate.*

CREDULITY OF INFIDELS.

CHARLES the II. says Addison, hearing the celebrated Vossius, a freethinker, repeating some incredible stories of the Chinese, turning to those about him, said, “This learned divine is a very strange man; he believes every thing but the Bible.”